
RESEARCH

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ARTURO USLAR PIETRI AND HIS PUBLISHERS*Arturo Uslar Pietri y sus Editores*

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ABSTRACT

In the House of Study of Venezuelan History: Lorenzo A. Mendoza Quintero, the correspondence file of Arturo Uslar Pietri is found. In this paper we will analyze, out of that big amount of letters, only those which are related to his publishers. These letters have been dated between 1946 and 1984, times in which Arturo Uslar Pietri held contact with the publishing houses for the publication of his works. A great quantity of these letters comes from the box No. 060,001 to 060,044, folder 060,011 which is titled "Losada Editorial", others come from his epistolary with important characters of the publishing world, such as Guillermo De Torre: and Carmen Ballcells, but also with authors who published together with him and shared the experiences of this process, like Miguel Angel Asturias and Luis Beltran Guerrero. Our objective with this research is to communicate the importance that the book market has for the diffusion of the works of the Latin American authors, and we have taken the concrete case of Arturo Uslar Pietri because we have the necessary documentation to make an analysis of part de this trajectory. This, sometimes, is not possible with other authors, since the required records to make a study with this subject matter were not kept. The conclusion that we came to, is that even though we are talking about an author with great national and international intellectual prestige , he struggled with his publishing houses, which were generally not punctual when it came to the payment of his work. Nonetheless, we also heard the voices of the publishers, such as Gonzalo Losada:, through whom we observed that the work of the publishing houses of Latin America is not safe from the legal and economic risks which will be presented in this work.

KEYWORDS

Publishing houses - Argentine - Spain - Latin America - XX Century.

RESUMEN

En la Casa de Estudio de la Historia de Venezuela, Lorenzo A. Mendoza Quintero, se encuentra el archivo de la correspondencia de Arturo Uslar Pietri. En este trabajo analizaremos de esa gran cantidad de cartas, solo aquellas que tienen relación con sus editores. Estas cartas se encuentran fechadas entre 1946 y 1984, años en los cuales Uslar Pietri mantuvo contacto con las editoriales para la publicación de sus obras. Buena parte de estas cartas provienen de la caja número 060.001-060044 carpeta 060.011 que lleva por título Editorial Losada, otras de su epistolario con figuras importantes del mundo editorial como Guillermo De Torre y Carmen Ballcells. Pero también con autores que publicaban junto con él quienes compartían las experiencias de este proceso como Miguel Ángel Asturias y Luis Beltrán Guerrero. Nuestro objetivo con este trabajo es comunicar la importancia que tiene el mercado editorial para la difusión de la obra de los autores latinoamericanos y hemos tomado el caso concreto de Arturo Uslar Pietri porque contamos con la documentación necesaria para hacer un análisis de parte de esta trayectoria, circunstancia que no es a veces posible con otros autores porque no se guardó la documentación necesaria para hacer un estudio con esta temática. La conclusión a que llegamos es que aunque estamos hablando de un autor con un gran prestigio intelectual nacional e internacional, tuvo problemas con sus editoriales que generalmente no eran puntuales en cancelarle sus honorarios. Sin embargo, también escuchamos las voces de los editores, como la de Gonzalo Losada por medio de las cuales observamos que el trabajo de las editoriales en Latinoamérica no está exento de riesgos legales y económicos que expondremos en este trabajo.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Editoriales - Argentina - España - Latinoamérica - Siglo XX

ARTURO USLAR PIETRI E SEUS EDITORES

RESUMO

Na Casa de Estudos da História de Venezuela, Lorenzo A. Mendoza Quintero encontra-se o arquivo da correspondência de Arturo Uslar Pietri. Neste trabalho analisaremos desta grande quantidade de cartas, somente aquelas que têm relação com seus editores. Estas cartas datadas entre 1946 e 1984, anos nos quais Uslar Pietri manteve contato com as editoras para a publicação de suas obras. Boa parte destas cartas provem da caixa numero 060.001-060044 pasta 060.011 que leva como titulo Editorial Losada, outras de seu epistolário com figuras importantes do mundo editorial como Guillermo De Torre y Carmen Ballcells. Mas também com autores que publicavam junto com os que compartiam as experiências de este processo como Miguel Angel Astúrias e Luis Beltran Guerrero. Nosso objetivo com esse trabalho é comunicar a importância quem tem o mercado editorial para a difusão da obra dos autores latino-americanos e tomamos o caso concreto de Arturo Uslar Pietri porque contamos com a documentação necessária fazer uma análise de parte desta trajetória, circunstância que nem sempre é possível com outros autores, porque não foi guardada a documentação necessária para um estudo desta temática. A conclusão

que chegamos é que apesar estarmos falando de um autor com grande prestígio intelectual nacional e internacional, teve problemas com suas editoras que geralmente não eram pontuais pagando seus honorários. Não obstante, escutamos as vozes dos editores, como a de Gonzalo Losada por meio das quais observamos que o trabalho das editoras em Latino-america não está isento de riscos legais e econômicos que exporemos neste trabalho.

PALAVRAS CHAVE

Editoras - Argentina - Espanha - Latino américa - Século XX

1. INTRODUCTION

For an intellectual, the mediation with the publishing world is essential for communicating with his audience, at least until the end of the twentieth century, when the Internet did not occupy much of the time of the readers. This is the case of Arturo Uslar Pietri and its relationship with the Losada Editorial located for a long time in Buenos Aires that we will study in this work. We will remind you that recently were 75 years since the founding of this important publisher for the distribution of books in Latin America.

The consulted correspondence spanning until 1984, also required us to communicate the results of Uslar Pietri contact with other publishers that will be expressed here, because it does not substantially modify the behavior of publishers with the author.

The folder where much of the information is found is number 060,011 and is divided into two parts, the first containing letters dated between 1946 and 1960 and the second between 1961 and 1984. The other letters that we got addressed to other recipients are in different folders. The final year of our inquiry was not set by any logic pertaining to the problem treated here, but that we did not record letters classified as from the author after that date in the Archives of the House of Study of History of Venezuela, Lorenzo A. Mendoza Quintero where we did most of the archival research.

2. DISSCUSION

2.1 Arturo Uslar Pietri and Argentina:

Uslar Pietri relations with the Losada publisher may be preceded by a few words that show the bond that the Venezuelan author had with that country. When the October 18 of 1945 he had to walk the path of exile so common to many Latin Americans throughout all our history. He kept receiving invitations to continue his intellectual work in Argentina. Such as the one you will hear next:

You. can imagine the pleasure that would cause your establishment with us. Frankly I do not know what to say regarding to the query that you make me. I am sure that a man of your high intellectual qualities may well develop beneficial activities for you and for us. Many foreign colleagues, even though in this case you would not be a foreigner, among us, are in professional positions

or operate in very important publishing companies. Aita, Antonio. Arturo Uslar Pietri file. Box 10. Folder 44.

This interest of Arturo Uslar for Argentina could be due to the presence of writers, publishers and printers that could facilitate his work. Despite the offers, he decides to go to New York, city in which he would work since 1946 at Columbia University, in the Department of Spanish. (Arraiz, 2005, p. 220-221).

This exile, that could have become a traumatic experience for Arturo Uslar Pietri, was extremely fruitful for literature what makes Luis Beltrán Guerrero exclaim: "Surely you are bigger in misfortune than in success. I enjoy it, as a friend, of your glory, truly chiseled now in exile and in pain" Guerrero, Luis. B. 31/07/1947. Arturo Uslar Pietri file. Box 80. Folder 218.

Later, on November 1, 1961, Gonzalo Losada showed in this correspondence his admiration for the literary work of Arturo Uslar Pietri, stating the following: "I look forward with interest and curiosity the originals of his new book A PORTRAIT IN GEOGRAPHY and from now I predict a great success because you are a man who can tell interesting things with a consummate art of a writer" File Arturo Uslar Pietri. Box number 060,001 to 060,044 060,011 folder.

Argentina's presence in the work of Uslar Pietri is felt in articles on some of its greatest creators such as Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Leopoldo Lugones and Jorge Luis Borges. Also the intellectual work of Uslar Pietri is discussed frequently by Argentines in the newspaper *La Nación* of Buenos Aires as it appears in the hemerographic studies that have been done about it.

Many later at the time of the Argentine crisis, in his book *Coup and State in Venezuela*, in an article titled "The pessimistic view of Latin America," published in 1989, he brilliantly transcribed to us the opinion of Argentines interviewed by Naipaul for a job published by *The New York Review of Books* in which they claim that his country was not feasible. Uslar Pietri's opinion is totally contrary:

In late eighteenth century, Argentina was one of the most promising and desired countries by European imperialist. The men who made the independence thought it was viable and heroically fought for a project that had no visible end. The same was thought by Albertí, Sarmiento or Mitre and men who, since the late nineteenth century, turned that country into one of the best examples of growth. Modernist poets in 1910, could celebrate with much emphasis the centenary of independence as the culmination of a great journey of creation, that would extend indefinitely in time to turn Argentina into one of the most prosperous countries in the world. The enthusiastic tone with which great poets such as Ruben Dario or Leopoldo Lugones celebrated the date, leaves no doubt. Not only Argentina seemed feasible to them, but prodigiously full of promise for the future. Uslar, 1989, p. 117.

2.2 Arturo Uslar Pietri and Editorial Losada

The consulted correspondence of Arturo Uslar Pietri and Editorial Losada is located at the Center for Documentation and Archives of the House of Study of History of Venezuela Lorenzo A. Mendoza Quintero as stated above.

Although the nature of the correspondence is mostly administrative, it notes the importance of the editorial aspect of the publication of the works of our authors, as is the case of Arturo Uslar Pietri that we will deal with here. The history of editorial work has not been taken into account within the intellectual history of Latin America but, in our view, it has had a major role in the development of our culture and the union of Latin American culture, this is why we wanted to contribute with this small contribution contained in this work.

To get an idea of the temporal and material importance of the relations with Arturo Uslar Pietri with this editorial we will quote a paragraph from the same author who describes it:

As you know, the Editorial Losada of Buenos Aires publishes *Las Lanzas Coloradas* periodically since thirty years ago. From the issues that I receive I see the justification for editions that are doing semiannual editions from 15 to 20,000 copies, that is,, more than 30,000 copies a year. Arturo Uslar Pietri file. Box number 060,001 to 060,044 folder 060,011. 04/07/1984.

In 2013 the Losada publishing house, founded on August 18, 1938, was 75 years old. In this work a so special date is remembered. Among its founders are included Guillermo de Torre, Felipe Jimenez de Asua, Atilio Rossi, Amado Alonso, the Dominican Pedro Henriquez Ureña and Francisco Romero. http://elpais.com/diario/2002/04/13/cultura/1018648803_850215.html: "After Calpe, or like it, the publisher LOSADA is the most named. It is, moreover, the liberal publisher. Calpe, the reactionary. So he should not go to another publisher" Guerrero, Luis. B. 31/07/1947. Arturo Uslar Pietri file. Box 80. Folder 218.

Its foundation coincides with the beginning of what will be one of the most important decades of production of the Argentine book, the forties, because due to the war situation in Europe the greatest production of books in Spanish language moved to the capital. So it's founders were not only Argentines. In the previous paragraph emphasis is done on the Caribbean origin of Pedro Henriquez Ureña (1894-1946) and its founder Gonzalo Losada (1894-1981) who was a Spaniard from Galicia. It is also important to note that these two characters had a generational link since both were born in the same year.

The intellectual climate that was present in Buenos Aires attracted at least two prominent Venezuelans who worked part of their work in that country, as were the musician Juan Vicente Lecuna and the historian, poet and literary critic Luis Beltran Guerrero. Both frequented Gonzalo Losada as is recorded in the correspondence that this latter author directed to Arturo Uslar Pietri from Buenos Aires.

Tomorrow the Commission (Romero, Albertí, Guillermo de Torre, etc.) will meet, and today I had a long conversation with Gonzalo Losada (who of old I knew due to an introduction by Pedro Henriquez Ureña, and had dealt with him in the house of Juan Vicente Lecuna), I conclude that the advisors that have read the book have their best judgment about it, which "has performed a great feat" (expression by Losada) ... Guerrero, Luis. B. 31/07/1947. Arturo Uslar Pietri file. Box 80. Folder 218.

Luis Beltran Guerrero also leaves a testimony of the intellectual climate in Buenos Aires in those years where events were held and figures came as pointed out in the next review:

A great POETRY FESTIVAL took place on Sunday , with the presence of Pablo Neruda, Rafael Alberti, Nicolas Guillén, Leon Felipe Gonzalez Carbalho, Rafael Dieste and Alejandro Casona. Neruda recited, among other poems, one dedicated to Bolivar. Guerrero, Luis. B. 31/07/1947. Arturo Uslar Pietri file. Box 80. Folder 218.

All this intellectual and human contact is born a good relationship between Arturo Uslar Pietri and the Losada publishing culminating in the publication of the following books:

The Way of El Dorado (1947), *Las Lanzas Coloradas* (1948), *Thirty men and their shadows* (1949), *The City of anyone. Autumn in Europe. A tourist in the Near East* (1960), *a portrait in geography. The Labyrinth of Fortune* (1962) *Masks Station. The Labyrinth of Fortune* (1964).

In the first few letters after signing the contract for the publication of "*The Road to El Dorado*", difficulties in the publication and distribution of books in Latin America were evident during this period. These circumstances also affected the reissue of *Las Lanzas Coloradas* and the publication of *Thirty Men and their shadows*, even prolonged and exacerbated to the point that they hindered the payment to Uslar of his copyright due to problems finding foreign currency in Argentina.

As expressed by Gonzalo Losada, these editorial difficulties that resulted in a long delay in the publication of the works of Uslar, were not from the publisher and to the will of Losada, rather they were of common character in Latin America, as expressed in a letter of February 16, 1949.

These difficulties did not affect the relations between Uslar and the publisher, because of the great affection that linked him to its founder, as can be seen in the correspondence, of which it is a sample the following paragraph:

I look forward with interest and curiosity the originals of his new work A *PORTRAIT IN GEOGRAPHY* and from now I predict a great success because you are a man who can tell interesting things with consummate art of a writer. Box number 060001-060044 folder 060011, 11.01.1961

Along with these expressions of admiration, Gonzalo Losada expressed in the letters judgments about their perception of the publishing market that can be helpful for all those facing this market:

If the novel interests and I do not doubt that it will interest, it will be sold, though its price may reduce something its potential circulation but not cancel it in any way.

But the reality is the reality that shows that the publishing business is neither as simple nor as lucrative as people think.

Instead, the distributor and the bookseller that do not create as the author nor risk as the publisher takes up to 50% of the price assigned to the book price plus surcharges they usually set in the conversion. box number 060001-060044 folder 060011, 11/10/61.

Along with the economic risks to the editor, there are the legal risks. Among the most important topics of this type is included the struggle for freedom of expression that fought the Editorial Losada for publishing a novel titled *The Rest of the Warrior* of Christiane Rochefort which was considered by an Argentine judge to be against the morals of the country:

... I will tell you that a national protest movement has risen that has had its expression in newspapers, magazines, television, radio and, finally, at the feast of tribute, which I accepted because the matter far outweighs the strictly personal,, that has been one of the most important events in the intellectual and political life of Argentina. We cannot remain silent to these sneaky attacks that are targeted directly to restrain freedom of expression, making the publishers themselves, impresarios etc., to be those who establish censorship, that is,, self-censorship, since the laws of the country does not allow that. Box number 060001-060044 folder 060011, 07.05.1961.

And he continues the following month:

In May 1961, justice was issued condemning Mr. Gonzalo Losada, editor, and Mr. Luis Amibilia, translator, to one and six months in prison, respectively. This measure is unprecedented in Argentina and sparked demonstrations of indignation and alarm as statements of the SADE (Argentine Society of Writers). Messages of solidarity came to the Editorial Losada from the world. Box number 060,001 to 060,044 folder 060,011.

The reply of Arturo Uslar Pietri will be given on July 18, 1961: "It seems incredible that at this point, (...) an Argentine judge has the strange occurrence of sending you to jail for publishing *The Rest of the Warrior*." Box number 060001-060044 folder 060011

The day July 13, 1979, Arturo Uslar Pietri issued a memo to Mrs. Carmen Balcells informing her which of his books are published by the Editorial Losada: *The Way of El Dorado*, *Las Lanzas Coloradas*, *The Labyrinth of Fortune City* and anyone 30 men and their shadows.

The Losada publishing did not have the absolute exclusivity over all the work of Uslar Pietri who was released by a famous publishing house such as Taurus in 1966 where he published his book *Steps and Passengers* and in November 13, 1980, he said: "Some years ago I gave the rights to my book *The other America*" to the Editorial Alliance."

2.3 An unhappy ending with the Losada publishing

The study of the affective and trade relations of Arturo Uslar Pietri with the editorial Losada that we will express here, can be a sign of how, , in some cases, the relationships between editors and authors in the Americas are managed. So we must keep in mind that Arturo Uslar Pietri does not represent the majority of the authors of our continent because the circulation of his works is very large relative to that usually published of our authors in Latin America. However, his stature does not

initially protects him from the dirty tricks of his publisher who finally agrees to pay the right price, after his successful claims.

The first disagreement arises over the novel *The Way of El Dorado* whose first edition comes out in 1947, as this author believes that the publisher has not paid sufficient publishing attention and he had focused only on promoting his novel *Las Lanzas Coloradas* that Gonzalo Losada thinks "it is one of the pearls of our catalog." Box number 060011 folder 060,001 to 060,044, 13/09/1977.

On October 10, 1977, Arturo Uslar Pietri writes to the Losada publishing:

By an elementary logic of sales, a book with good demand serves as a locomotive to drag the other by the same author. Perhaps it lacked a little promotion in this regard, particularly as regards to *THE PATH OF EL DORADO*. Box number 060,001 to 060,044, folder 060,011.

Since 1979 the deterioration of business and personal relationships between Losada and Arturo Uslar Pietri begin to be observed, who constantly complains that he has not received fair payment for the sale of his books and the absence of its founder Gonzalo Losada. This same year he informed the publisher that Carmen Balcells has been commissioned"-by the Literary Agency of Barcelona, Spain, about everything concerning my relations with the publishers of my books. She is performing at this time a review of the status of those relations and, therefore, will address you in my representation. "Box number 060,001 to 060,044, folder 060,011

In that same letter addressed to the Losada publishing from Caracas on July 12, 1979 reminds them that: "I have very old and good relations with the Editorial Losada since at least 1947, and particularly with its former President and owner , Mr. Gonzalo Losada, my excellent friend. "Box number 060,001 to 060,044, folder 060,011

Then on April 17, 1980, he writes in his correspondence: "It is not without regret that for the first time in so many years of relationship I have to deal with this house on strictly commercial terms but the circumstances seem to bring us to this field." Case number 060001-060044 folder 060011

By the October 21, 1981 Uslar Pietri states to the Losada publishing the need that his work to be published and sold by other publishers. The claim starts around *The road of El Dorado*: "But I believe necessary to authorize other editors, outside Argentina, without exclusivity, to produce new editions and in this sense I have agreed with my agent in Barcelona, Mrs. Carmen Balcells "Box number 060,001-060,044, folder 060011 to.

The answer of the publisher Losada is not delayed on November 13, 1981, they will give in for this project the markets of Mexico and Spain, but keeping the rest of Latin American countries:

We tend to simply accept his decision, but we understand that we must preserve the Latin American space exclusively; leaving the important markets of Spain and Mexico to share with the issues you wish to authorize. Box folder number 060,001 to 060,044 060,011

On July 9, 1984 Arturo Uslar Pietri exclaims: "... more than five years that I have not received any statement or settlement relating to my works that you publish, what worries me and causes mesurprise. (...) I am creditor of you for quite a sum of consideration. "Box number 060,001 to 060,044 folder 060,011

On January 25, 1983 he informs to the Losada publishing house that he wants to give to Mrs Carmen Balcells all the freedom to conclude contracts she deems appropriate

and necessary for his work and therefore he will not intervene regarding to what these concerns:

I received your kind letter of 11th of the present in which communicates to me be to be dealing with Mrs. Balcells for a new edition of *The Road to El Dorado* for Spain and Mexico. I am delighted that you can reach a fair agreement because I do not want to interfere with the efforts she makes as my representative. Box folder number 060,001 to 060,044 060,011.

In private correspondence with Carmen Balcells on July 9, 1984, he states:

No receipt settlement since April 1979. Considering that have been doing editions of about 30,000 copies per year in the past five years and that the sale price agreed is the equivalent of US \$ 4.00 per copy, this would give the sum of 150,000 copies sold and about US \$ 600,000, which represents a mine acreencia by a very respectable sum with respect to that house. Box number 020,001 to 020,057, 020,010 folder, 09/07/1984.

To continue on September 20, 1984, with his claim to the Losada publishing:

I believe that in these conditions cease for you any authorization to edit my books, in addition to reserve the legal action to which I am entitled. Sincerely I regret that the friendly and loyal relationships that I had with the founder of this house, Don Gonzalo Losada, have come to such a sorry end. Box number 060,001 to 060,044 folder 060,011.

In correspondence of 19 October 1984 Arturo Uslar Pietri delves on the problem in question and we can get an idea about the printing that the works of Uslar Pietri reached in that publishing:

You say that the payment announced to me is only part of the debt and I understand it, and that the total amount of what is owed me 580,042 Argentine pesos, which converted into dollars gives the figure of U.S. \$ 8,056. This figure does not correspond to reality. According to authentic billings from booksellers in Caracas, you quoted them the copy of "The red lances" to US \$ 2.20 a copy, which with about 60,000 copies, according to you, that is the total and final sales, it yields an income US \$ 132,000. 10% of this amount is undoubtedly U.S. \$ 13,200 which represents, according to your figures, a difference against me of U.S. \$ 5,144. Box number 060,001 to 060,044, folder 060,011.

On December 4, 1984 we have a letter from Arturo Uslar Pietri to Mrs. Carmen Balcells which states that the Losada publishing will pay the figure owed to him and that he instructs her the closure of this negotiation:

As you will see, it becomes a mess trying to explain what has no explanation, but eventually they offer to pay the not insignificant sum of U.S. \$ 13,200. I think that it is prudent to ensure this payment as soon as possible and then proceed forward with your projects for placing "The red lances". To Losada I replied informing them of the receipt of your letter and telling him that I have sent it to you for proper processing. Box number 020,001 to 020,057, folder 020,010.

Thus ends the inconvenience narrated that may be illustrative of the not always easy relations of authors with publishers of their works in our continent who the literary agent Carmen Balcells tried to make fairer.

The correspondence of Uslar Pietri with the Editorial Losada continues until December 4, 1984 in what we have verified, when Losada shares the copyright transferred at a time to this editorial by Uslar Pietri with other publishers like Seix Barral, the Black Sheep, Salvat and the Armas Group.

2.4 Arturo Uslar Pietri and Carmen Balcells

From June 1979, Arturo Uslar Pietri decides to delegate the responsibility of the distribution and publishing of his books to Mrs. Carmen Balcells. He gives her the title of Lady to this Catalan publisher, throughout his correspondence. This decision is taken because:

... The Losada publishing is no longer owned by Gonzalo Losada, my good friend, which completely changed my relationship with this house which is founded above all on my old personal friendship with this remarkable man. I do not know who are the new owners but, of course, my relationship now is purely commercial and therefore I can claim many things that did not do before. Among others, the payment of rights that has always been done in a symbolic way because they never stop announcing the amount of Argentine pesos immobilized that they have at my disposal but that never arrive" Box number 020,001 to 020,057, 020,010 folder, 18/06 / 1979

In this part of the work we will deal with the editorials contacts that Arturo Uslar Pietri establishes through his correspondence with Carmen Balcells. They could have been many more but these are the ones that are registered in this correspondence.

With no doubt Mrs. Carmen Balcells starts moving the work of Arturo Uslar Pietri, in almost a month after her appointment, we find that she offered the story *The Winners* to Seix Barral and Bruguera. Likewise, she begins to offer the work of Arturo Uslar Pietri in other environments such as Colombian television has brought to the screen through the producer RTI *The Bad time of Garcia Marquez*. On the quality of these programs he pronounces as follows: "They produced, in that series, *The Bad Time of Garcia Marquez*. It is of very good quality and this makes me think that they would make a film worthy and well done: "Box number 020,001 to 020,057, folder 020,010, 06/27/1979

On March 20, 1981 the signing of the contract arrives for the television adaptation of his stories: "*THE NEIGHBOR, THE ENEMY, AND OUR. LADY OF. GOOD DEATH* and *THE SECOND DEATH OF DON EMILIO*."

About the signing of this contract Arturo Uslar Pietri thinks:

In response to what is in the letter today I send a cable giving authorization to sell the rights to my 4 stories to the Colombian television chain R.T.I. I agree with you that the payment is ridiculously low but anyway I have authorized it by the interest that has for me is the broadcasting. Box number 020,001 to 020,057, folder 020,010, 27.2.1981.

However, this correspondence not only expresses the difficulties it has with the Losada publishing but also with other publishers like Seix Barral:-

I'd like you to reclaim a little from Barral on the distribution of *Ghosts of two worlds* in Spain. I constantly receive reports that it is difficult to get it in bookstores, and I have the impression that Seix-Barral, in the case of my books, prefers to concentrate on the Venezuelan market is for them the safest and most productive and certainly it is not what interests me most. Box number 020,001 to 020,057, folder 020,010, 18.6.1979.

In 1980 they begin to discuss more specifically the copyright of Uslar Pietri, as had not been done before in this correspondence:

As I say in my letter about Las Lanzas Coloradas, I think it's much more interesting to you to be entirely free of any commitment to Losada as regards the new book, even paying some of the rights to THE SPEARS.

In order to expedite the process of contract with Seix Barral, I'll send it with three copies, and if you approve it I bag you to the return the three them signed. You will see that the contract establishes an advance payment of US \$ 7000 ... for signature, about royalties of 10% to 20,000 copies sold, from 12% to 50,000 and 15% later on.

The duration is of five years, for a normal edition only, that is, that the pocket rights remain entirely free for their possible future contract. Box number 030.001-020.057, folder 020.010, 8/04/1981.

When Uslar Pietri signed the previous contracts with the Losada publishers, a limit date for their termination was not stated; no doubt that other winds are blowing now.

However, although he signs the contract, he is not entirely in agreement with the stated terms.

The new book, to which Uslar Pietri refers in this part of his correspondence is *The Island of Robinson* with which he expected to overcome the resistance of the international market. From his correspondence with the Losada publishers, already mentioned, we see the interest of Uslar Pietri to place his works in this market. "I expect that *The Island of Robinson* opens for it and for other books, the hard doors of the international market. Box number 020.001-020.057, folder 020.010, 29/04/1981.

The duration is five years, for normal edition only, that is to say that the rights of pocket are entirely free for its possible future contracting. Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 04/8/1980.

When Uslar Pietri signed the previous contracts with Losada Publishing Company there was not an end date for its completion, other winds were now blowing undoubtedly.

However, although he signs the contract, he does not agree very much with the terms expressed.

The new book to which Uslar Pietri refers in this part of his correspondence is *The Island of Robinson* with which he hoped to overcome the resistance of the international market. Since his correspondence with Losada Publishing Company, we see Uslar

Pietri's interest in locating his works in this market: "I hope that *The Island of Robinson* opens the hard doors of the international edition for it and for other books" Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 04/29/1981

The correspondence with Carmen Balcells is about the importance that Uslar Pietri grants to his book *The Island of Robinson* on which he expresses to us:

In an Argentine magazine that published the list of best sellers in Buenos Aires, *The island of Robinson* appeared about 10 days ago among the 10 most read books at that moment. I have the conviction that this is a very important book in Latin American literature and that it should merit the interest of translators in other languages, because in many respects it is an almost unique testimony of our culture and the characteristics of this world so peculiar through some great historical personages. Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 03/23/1982.

However, his relationship with Seix Barral is no better than with Losada, but for other reasons. Seix Barral joins Planeta and part of the inconveniences with the books of Uslar Pietri come from that merger:

"I have the impression that, at least in Venezuela, the merger of Seix-Barral with Planet will not be favorable for the former. I do not have the impression that they are going to make much promotion to the books of Seix-Barral and that they will be a little like the poor relatives of the house "30/07/1982. Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010.

A year later he addresses a letter to the Seix-Barral Publishing Company that ends with the following statements:

Mrs Carmen Balcells' efforts have been equally fruitless. I consider that what she has done to me is serious and is grounds enough for a lawsuit in defense of my rights and interests. If I do not get a final and definitive answer to this vexing matter at the earliest possible moment, I will have no other way than the judicial procedure that I do not want. Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 07/07/1983.

However, after this date, he continues to write about the little advertising made by Seix Barral in favor of *The Road of El Dorado*.

I have the impression that Seix-Barral has been a little neglectful in promoting my books. Friends of mine who visited the recent Book Fair in Madrid tell me that they did not see either *The Island of Robinson* or any of the other titles. It would be worth complaining to these gentlemen so that they show a little more interest. Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 06/07/1984.

He also deals with his contacts with other publishers such as Alianza Publishing House to which he gives the rights to his book *The Other America* which also does not cancel his fees:

The copyright that should amount at present to more than 100,000 pesetas have not been paid to me. I will thank you very much that you intervene in this matter, both to get the payment and to get the book reedited, because I understand that the edition has sold out. Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020101, 13/11/80.

In 1981 he also started contacts with the Colombian Interedit Publishing Company: "I have just received your letter dated December 22, which deals with the project of the Colombian Interedit Publishing Company to publish some novels in illustrated fascicles." Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 01/16/1981

In 1983 he received an offer from Salvat Publishing Company with which he had relations before this epistolary and by means of which we realize the amount of the sales of one of the works of Uslar Pietri in this publishing company:

I received your kind letter dated 24 of the current month in which you told me that the Salvat Publishing Company intends to re-publish the Basic Library and to include again in it my novel *The Red Spears*. The first time, by 1974, it was a great success and, according to the liquidations that they sent me, they sold 400,000 copies. Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 04/07/1983.

The Red Spears is also going to be published by La Oveja Negra Publishing Company and he writes to Carmen Balcells "I am returning the contract signed with La Oveja Negra for the edition of *The Red Spears*." Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 23 / 03/1984

3. CONCLUSION

The last letter that refers to this publishing company tells us about *The Red Spears* destined only for Venezuela: "I received your kind letter dated November 14 with which you sent me the draft contract with Oveja Negra Publishing Company from Colombia for an edition of *The Red Spears* intended to be sold in Venezuela. Box number 020.001-020.057, Folder 020.010, 12/6/1984

This is the last letter that we could register in the Archive of Lorenzo A. Mendoza Quintero House of Study of the History of Venezuela. We remind the reader that there are still 17 years until 2001 when the author dealt with passed away. We have not analyzed here the records of the editorial behavior of many of his books published in this last period of time and of his last novel *The Visit Through Time* published in 1990, the year in which he is conferred the prize Prince of Asturias of Letters.

We did not find in this file the evolution of all the editorial behavior of the work of Arturo Uslar Pietri; however, this sample of correspondence can be significant as regards the problem that a writer of the stature of Arturo Uslar Pietri had for the collection of his copyright . This did not happen only with Losada Publishing Company, as we showed in the first section of this paper, but with other publishers such as Alianza, Seix Barral and Planeta publishing companies as we have been able to verify through the correspondence analyzed here. If this situation of disrespect to complying with the payments is made with the author dealt with, we do not believe that the situation is different with respect to other Latin American authors.

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